

NSC BRIEFING

23 April 1958

YUGOSLAV-SOVIET RELATIONS (short)

- I. Bloc boycott of Yugoslav party congress and recent Soviet condemnation of Yugoslav party program are extremely serious blow to Yugoslav-Soviet relations.
 - A. All bloc countries followed Moscow's lead and withdrew their official delegations.
 - B. Likewise, bloc members are supporting Moscow's strong rebuttal of Yugoslav program.
 - C. In lieu of delegations bloc assigned ambassadors to the congress as observers.
 1. With exception of Polish ambassador, their refusal to return to hall following a break highlighted boycott.
- II. On 18 April, Soviet journal Kommunist condemned as non-Marxist virtually every principle of Yugoslav ideology.
 - A. Kommunist stated that unless these non-Marxist views were dropped there is no hope for any future role for Yugoslavia in bloc.
- III. While Tito seriously concerned over dispute, there is little likelihood that he will knuckle under since concessions on main issues would represent abandonment of Yugoslav road to socialism.
 - A. Aware of Soviet intentions to boycott congress, Belgrade on 17 April announced changes in its draft.
 1. These concessions were minor and were not on basic ideology.
 2. Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow met with Khrushchev on changes but nothing came of it.
 - B. Tito in speech at the congress merely confirmed Yugoslav road to socialism.

1. But his chief lieutenant Rankovic said "certain very responsible people who are our neighbors...are again sharpening the old and rusty weapons of the Cominform."

- IV. Soviet attack on Yugoslav program was cast in terms of an ideological schism. If Yugoslavs refuse to concede, Yugoslavia will be in ideological isolation to a degree similar to that of 1948.
 - A. Apparently Moscow and Belgrade still hope to avoid complete break as in 1948 and want to maintain diplomatic relations.
 - B. Tito still supports most Soviet foreign policy objectives.
 - C. The tone of ~~one of~~ Tito's recent speeches suggests, however, that he may be interested in regaining Western confidence as he praised US aid to which no strings were attached.
- V. Yugoslavs now in rather general isolation.
 - A. Visit by Tito to Gomulka scheduled for late spring now assumes considerable significance.
 - B. Western Europe's socialists have refused to attend congress because of Tito's treatment of Djilas.
 - C. Yugoslavs likely to continue to hope that history is on their side and that ultimately their views will win out.